1: Ammar E, I-5 (1951) 1954
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Silwa
Copts MR10

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few city-dwellers, as most of the products of the modern schools, are seldom acquainted with the names of these months, their functional importance is obvious to the greater part of the Egyptian rural population.

For the village boys, the memorizing of these month-names is greatly helped by the descriptive rhyming phrases that connect them with such significant climatic changes or agricultural events. The table opposite shows the Coptic months and the corresponding dates of the European calendar, as well as the Lunar calendar.

The following are the rhyming phrases connected with the Coptic months. It is to be noticed that they are connected either with the climatic conditions or with wheat in winter, or a kind of millet (different from the one grown after perennial irrigation was introduced) called 'damiri' and which used to be grown in autumn, lasting for two months.

Toot:
He is a fool who expects flood in Toot.

Babah:
If the millet's cob is not fully ripe in this month, not much harvest is to be expected.

Hatoor:
Hatoor calls the cold to commence.

Kiyah:
Compels the barking dog to sleep.[1]

Toobah:
In Toobah my ankle has never been wetted by water.[2]

Amsheer:
The first ten of Amsheer makes one's skin shiver (chopped).

Baramhat:
One can enter the field and get corn (corn begins to ripen).

Baramoudah:
The corn is gathered into heaps.

Bashans:
The chaff is taken away from the sun (loaded home).

Baoonah:
Full of hardship, and it is not advisable to eat eggs or fish (due probably to the excessive heat).

Abeeb:
One does not find it difficult to get dates.

Misri:
Between Misri and Abeeb, send they joy-cries, O beloved (the peak of the Nile flood). This applies, of course, to the days of the basin irrigation,

[1] One of the boys added that in Kiyah the sleeping dog brings his head nearer to his tail.

[2] This is the period of drought called 'gafaf' during which the government allows no water to remain in the canals so that they may be cleaned out; thus water is not available for irrigation.

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1: Ammar E, I-5 (1951) 1954
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APPENDIX II

when the land used to be flooded with the water of the Nile during this period.[1]

Thus these phrases connected with the Coptic months contain some of the community's wisdom related to its technical activities, food consumption and indications of weather changes. It is worth noting that while there are no fixed dates in the Coptic Calendar for any specific agricultural activities, the latter are carried out within a certain time-limit, such as the beginning of a month or second week in a month or towards the end or before beginning of such and such a month, and so forth.

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The following is a seasonal calendar for the various types of farm work as regulated by the Coptic Calendar.

Coptic Months	*Agricultural Activities*
Toot	*The Winter Crop (Shitwi)* Either fallow land or early harvested millet: during the first ten days of the month land is sown with clover (berseem).
Babah	Sowing of wheat and barley (during the first ten days). First irrigation of beans and clover.
Hatoor	First irrigation of wheat and barley called 'cleaning irrigation'. Cutting clover before irrigation. Irrigation of beans.
Kiyah	Second irrigation of wheat and barley after distributing fertilizer. Cutting of clover for the second time.[1] Irrigation of beans and clover.
Toobah	Third irrigation of wheat, with fertilizer only for the weak section. Third irrigation of barley. Third cutting of clover. Irrigation of clover and beans.

[1] Clover is cut four times, at intervals of thirty days.

1: Ammar E, I-5 (1951) 1954
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APPENDIX II

Coptic Months	*Agricultural Activities*
Amsheer	Fourth irrigation of some wheat sections. [illegible] cutting of clover. Boys begin to collect fertilizer for the summer crop.
Baramhat	Harvesting of barley and beans. Harvesting of early grown wheat.
Baramoudah	Harvesting of wheat. Clearing the land, and preparing soil by digging or ploughing it for the summer crop. By the end of the month the millet is sown.
Bashans	*The Summer Crop* First irrigation of millet after fertilizing. Second irrigation, as millet requires water every fifteen days.
Baoonah	Breaking up the soil, and weeding. Second irrigation after fertilizing. Third irrigation at the end of the month.
Abeeb	Fourth irrigation with fertilizer for weak plants. Fifth irrigation for some plants. Boys begin to collect fertilizer for winter crop.
Misri	Harvesting.

The calendar gives the main crops which practically every farmer in the village grows and which constitute his diet of wheat and barley bread in summer, and millet bread in winter. Apart from these, clover (berseem) forms the main feeding-stuff for the domestic animals in the winter, while chaff and the millet plant leaves serve as fodder in summer.

241 This 'leaven of the land' has still to be put to the soil.
242 Twenty times a day the donkey, laden with great panniers
292 or sacks and driven by the fellah's son, carries the manure
293 to the field and goes back to reload. There are no carts or barrows for this work, and the distances are often great. The farmer lays down the manure generously, whether it be natural humus or chemical fertiliser, and packs it by hand round the plant to be encouraged.

Getting in the Crops

461 All this attention is paid to the soil in order that it may yield its fruits. It follows that the fellah's work must continue from seed-time till harvest. The days are gone when he could go away after sowing and return in a few months' time to gather the crop. The struggle for life has become continuous and unrelenting. Since the introduction of cotton and the establishment of perennial irrigation, the fellah has no slack season and is always tending some crop or other.

241 The crops follow a system of rotation covering a period
803 of two or three years. Taking cotton first, the succession
221 will be as follows:

February-October	Cotton
November-May	Wheat, berseem or barley
May-June	(Partly fallow)
June-November	Maize or rice
December-February	Berseem
April-October	Cotton
November-May	Winter cereals or berseem
May-November	Maize (or fallow)
November-March	Berseem or winter cereals
March-June	(Partly fallow)
June-October	Maize or rice
November-March	Berseem

This calendar of crop rotation is observed with but little variation everywhere in the country, according to the need and experience of the farmer. I have translated it into Gregorian months; but the fellaheen keep to the Coptic Calendar, which is based on the Nile flood and goes back to ancient times. It begins with the month of *Tût* (September), in which the Nile reaches its highest level, and divides the solar year into twelve months. There is a series of Arabic
[538] proverbs deriving originally from Pharaonic Egypt, which

3: Ayrout M-5 (ca. 1935) 1945
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assign to each month its proper task. Wheat, which at that time was the main crop, is frequently mentioned, but the new-fangled cotton not at all [24].

This same calendar also regulates the Coptic ecclesiastical year, for when Christianity came to Egypt it made no change in the existing customs. The reckoning begins from A.D. 284, the first year of Diocletian's reign, called 'The Year of the Martyrs'. In actual fact, the great persecutions took place in A.D. 304.

Moslems, on the other hand, start from the *hegira*, or Flight of the Prophet (622 A.D.), and count in lunar months.

Since 1875, Egypt has officially employed the Gregorian Calendar, which is gradually penetrating everywhere. The Government has not kept the ancient Egyptian names for the months, nor has it translated the Roman names. It has simply taken over their popular adaptations as follows: - *yanayer, febrayer, mâris, abrîl, myo, yûnyo, yûlyo, oghostos* and so on. The Ministry of Agriculture works by this calendar to the exclusion of the other two, and so, if not actually used by all the fellaheen, it is understood by most of them.

At this point it will be convenient to describe the principal crops of contemporary Egypt, which are also those at which most of the fellaheen work, namely cotton, which is the main source of the country's wealth; maize and wheat, which provide its daily bread; and *berseem*, the fodder of its cattle. Of the rest we shall say only a word or two in passing.

A. THE "GARDENING" OF THE COTTON PLANT

Cotton was not unknown to the Ancient Egyptians. Some fabrics of Pharaonic times seem to be woven of cotton thread, and Pliny mentions its use. Its development in Egypt for industrial purposes took place in the mid-nineteenth century after the experiments of Jumel. Perennial irrigation, introduced about the same time, together with the increase of the population, and the advantageous openings on the English market, very soon made cotton the principal crop of the country. The world crisis of 1930, which led to a slump in cotton, forced the Egyptian Government to restrict it to a quarter of the total cultivated area. Despite

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

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Dogs of Arabs.

Everywhere on the margin of the Nile valley, are to be found Arab families, who, with their low, brown tents and a little live stock, shift north or south according to the season of the year. Their bristly, barking dogs are not particularly friendly animals. Moreover, perhaps even the Arabs themselves are here designated by the term, "dogs".

Ma 'ultē-lak, ya 'Ali?:
Baddar bina, baddar!
aḥsan kilāb el-'arab fuṭ-ṭur' bithabbar.
Win habbarūk, ya 'Ali,
maktūb u-m'addar.

Did I not tell thee so, 'Ali?
"Let us make an early start, an early start!
Else the Arabs' dogs will attack thee on the streets.
But if they should fall upon thee, 'Ali,
Then it is thus written and decreed."

2–5 contain a former warning, which is again given 'Ali. He laughed at it and they did not start until later. Then he actually suffered harm at the hands of the Arabs.

5 In the book of fate, according to the fatalistic doctrine held by the Moslems.